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Finding Direction, Finding Inspiration

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Finding Direction, Finding Inspiration

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We often have the choice of moving forward or backward, one direction or the other. How do we know the right path to take, which way to go? This issue brings us a plethora of dichotomies, choices to make, and paths to forge.

Susan Siggelakis starts us off with an analysis of *The Voyage to Kazohinia*, a satiric utopian (or dystopian) novel. The novel's narrator is cast adrift, and encounters two very different societies with very different views of mathematics.

Salvatore Petrilli then describes for us a mathematics orientation seminar at Adelphi University, a course that has helped point students toward finding their passion in mathematics and led to improved retention. Andrea Reichenberger then turns to the usual gloom surrounding Gödel's incompleteness theorem and shows how it led the way to a more solid and versatile proof theory.

Spayd, Reynolds, and Lansinger compare two abstract artists with very different perspectives of the early twentieth century, László Moholy-Nagy and Piet Mondrian.

Next we consider ways of teaching mathematics. Lipka, Adams, Wang, Koester, and François explore how the centrality of symmetry and measuring among the Yupiaq elders can inspire mathematical teaching. Melanie Butler then presents strategies to help students learn to read mathematics. Kate McCallum then considers that visual mainstay of low-dimensional topologists: the knot diagram. Richard Delaware then brings us a dialog exploring the issue of how we understand proof writing (and the pitfalls therein).

Crossing the STEM/humanities boundary can be difficult. Bourdeau and Wood explore the question of how to introduce STEM students to the humanities, and why it is important to do so. Michael Goldstein brings us a story of mathematics interacting with grief to alleviate suffering. Sarah Voss then shares stories of how her mathematics background has influenced her ministry through the use of metaphors. Kristin Kennedy reports on an event at Bryant University designed to get people to fall in love with mathematics on Valentine's Day.

There are untold connections to be made between the humanities and mathematics. Steven Deckelman looks at incorporating philosophy, theology, and history in an introduction to proof course. Maria Mannone then builds a connection between mathematics and music through category theory.

Ali Barahmand considers conjectures that have resisted many attempts and how counterexamples help move mathematics forward. Ann von Mehren shares lessons she learned from the philosopher Gorgias about teaching mathematics. Benjamin Braun and Eric Kahn share a dialog of their experiences and motivations in teaching history of mathematics.

In a candid perspective essay, Lynette DeAun Guzmán recounts her stories of becoming a mathematics educator against a background of expectations that altered her perspective on mathematics.

Poet Eveline Pye reviews for us the recent book of poems, *Ode to Numbers*, by Sarah Glaz. Accompanying the review is the first poetry folder in this issue; Sarah Glaz offers a selection of poems from *Ode to Numbers* spanning history and the mathematical truths that rocked the ancient world. In our second poetry folder, Mary Peelen presents us with mathematical poems inspired by her travels. Jenny Patton, Michael, Holcomb, Craig Steele, Ricky Chen, and Scott Williams round out our poetry selections this time.

Hugh Culik brings us a recollection of an offbeat childhood in his fiction piece *What the Wasp Said*. Readers may remember his protagonist McMann from earlier stories.

Finally, Savic, Cilli-Turner, Tang, Karakok, and El Turkey close our issue with a call for papers for a new special issue of the Journal of Humanistic Mathematics focusing on creativity in mathematics. We urge you to let your creative energies flow and send us your papers!